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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Fifty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 17 May 2001 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

I write to you with reference to my letter of 14 May 2001 (A/ES-10/84-S/2001/479), particularly with regard to the heinous crime of execution committed by the Israeli occupying forces against five Palestinian policemen who had been stationed at a post in Beitunia near the city of Ramallah. These killings perpetrated by the occupying forces signal an ever more dangerous escalation of Israeli military aggression and war crimes against the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem.

In this regard, Israel's policy of extrajudicial killings has been reaffirmed by the emergence of more facts in recent days regarding this tragic event, including public admissions by high-ranking Israeli military and government officials that the execution of those five men was indeed intentional, irrespective of Israeli claims that it was a case of "mistaken identity". Moreover, disclosures about the specific intent of this execution corroborate repeated Palestinian assertions regarding the official Israeli policy and practice of extrajudicial killings, assassinations and executions. Not only do these brutal actions indicate an utter and total disregard for human life, they clearly represent grave breaches of international law and international humanitarian law, including article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions, and are tantamount to war crimes and State terrorism.

The perpetrators of these crimes, including high-ranking officials in the Israeli government and military responsible for such orders, must be held accountable and prosecuted for their actions. Failure to do so can only serve to perpetuate such crimes in the future, for, as noted in General Assembly resolution 55/111 (4 December 2000), entitled "Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions", "*impunity continues to be a major cause of the perpetuation of violations of human rights, including extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions*" (para. 2).

Furthermore, recent statements made by Israeli officials to various media have indeed confirmed Israel's intentions to intensify its military assault against the

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Palestinian people. The Israeli occupying forces continued this week to pursue further incursions into Palestinian-controlled areas using tanks and bulldozers, resulting in extensive damage to homes, buildings and fields and dozens of injuries among Palestinian civilians. Incursions late last night also included the firing of rockets and missiles targeting Palestinian police structures located in densely populated civilian areas in the West Bank town of Jenin and the Jabaliya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. Also yesterday, Israeli occupying forces seized a Palestinian building in the Gaza Strip. In this regard, the Israeli army stated that its forces now have authority for "taking positions on houses in Palestinian areas for varying periods of time according to need". Such statements and actions are a stark indication of the mounting seriousness and longevity of these repeated Israeli incursions.

In follow-up to my previous letters to you on this grave matter, dated from 29 September 2000 to 15 May 2001 (A/55/432-S/2000/921; A/55/437-S/2000/930; A/55/450-S/2000/957; A/55/466-S/2000/971; A/55/474-S/2000/984; A/55/490-S/2000/993; A/ES-10/39-S/2000/1015; A/ES-10/40-S/2000/1025; A/ES-10/42-S/2000/1068; A/ES-10/43-S/2000/1078; A/ES-10/44-S/2000/1093; A/ES-10/45-S/2000/1104; A/ES-10/46-S/2000/1107; A/ES-10/47-S/2000/1116; A/ES-10/48-S/2000/1129; A/ES-10/49-S/2000/1154; A/ES-10/50-S/2000/1173; A/ES-10/51-S/2000/1185; A/ES-10/52-S/2000/1206; A/ES-10/53-S/2000/1247; A/ES-10/54-S/2001/7; A/ES-10/55-S/2001/33; A/ES-10/56-S/2001/50; A/ES-10/57-S/2001/101; A/ES-10/58-S/2001/131; A/ES-10/59-S/2001/156; A/ES-10/60-S/2001/175; A/ES-10/61-S/2001/189; A/ES-10/64-S/2001/209; A/ES-10/65-S/2001/226; A/ES-10/66-S/2001/239; A/ES-10/67-S/2001/255; A/ES-10/68-S/2001/284; A/ES-10/69-S/2001/295; A/ES-10/70-S/2001/304; A/ES-10/71-S/2001/314; A/ES-10/72-S/2001/332; A/ES-10/75-S/2001/352; A/ES-10/76-S/2001/372; A/ES-10/79-S/2001/418; A/ES-10/80-S/2001/432; A/ES-10/81-S/2001/447; A/ES-10/82-S/2001/463; A/ES-10/83-S/2001/471; A/ES-10/84-S/2001/479; and A/ES-10/85-S/2001/486), I regret to inform you that one more Palestinian civilian, a 14-year-old boy, was killed by the Israeli occupying forces since my letter to you on 15 May. (The name of the martyr is contained in the annex to the present letter.) The killing of this child raises the total number of Palestinian martyrs since 28 September 2000 to 462 people.

We reiterate the need for the international community to undertake urgent measures to bring an end to this bloody and escalating Israeli military campaign against the Palestinian people under occupation. The Security Council must undertake its duties and responsibilities in this regard, taking into consideration the recent request for an official meeting of the Council made by the Arab Group on 16 May. Action has been long overdue, and this has served only to encourage a severe culture of impunity as Israel continues to intensify its military aggression against the Palestinian people.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nasser **Al-Kidwa**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

Annex to the identical letters dated 17 May 2001 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

Names of martyrs killed by Israeli occupying forces in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem*

(Wednesday, 16 May 2001 to Thursday, 17 May 2001)

Wednesday, 16 May 2001

1. Mohammed Salim (14 years old)

* Total number of Palestinian martyrs killed by Israeli occupying forces since 28 September 2000 = 462.